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ABSTRACT

Vocational guidance stands out as the most urgent need of women participating in the work market. Adequate guidance can help direct women's abilities to appropriate levels of work and thus avoid frustration and waste of talent. Being better counseled, educated and trained, women will be prepared to accept more demanding, interesting and more highly paid positions. It is the responsibility of women and also of those who help to shape the lives of women, and those who have influence on educational and vocational development to make serious attempts to assist both young and adult women. (Author)

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VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE OF WOMEN

PHYCHOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

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VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE OF WOMEN:
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

by

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years great stress has been laid on the need for vocational guidance for women. The major reason for this is that more and more women have been giving voice to their discontent about the roles they have been playing, for most of them find that they do not have adequate qualifications or available opportunities to be productive, and to feel a sense of personal worth and fulfillment. This is evident in research findings published in professional journals, in best sellers, and in articles appearing in popular magazines.

According to the Labour Canada Women's Bureau report for 1975, entitled **Women in the Labour Force**, the total number of working women was 3,324,000 or 34.4 percent of the labour force. This figure showed a percentage increase of 68.6, compared with the female labour force in 1964. Of all employed women, 35.4 percent were in clerical occupations; 18 percent were service workers; 10.1 percent were in sales; 9.2 percent were in nursing, therapy and related assisting occupations, and 7 percent were in teaching. There were only 2.7 percent in managerial and administrative posts; 1.5 percent in social sciences; and 0.8 percent in natural science, engineering and mathematics. The above statistics indicates that almost 80 percent of the women employed were in sex-typing occupations which accord the least prestige. Only a tiny minority of women (5 percent) were in occupations of high regard and high reward. The question as to why women do not assume occupational tasks of high regard and high reward when education is explicitly made equal to both male and female demands an answer.

The high percentage increase of women in the labour force is a striking phenomenon since 1960. The chief reason for this is that great numbers of young women are trying to combine careers outside the home with the time-honoured roles of wife, mother and home maker. In addition, older women seek work again after their children have grown up and left home.

Although 34.4 percent of the labour force is made up of women, in reality women are underpaid as compared to men. In 1972, the average annual salary of women employed in service occupations was $2,926, compared with $7,507 for men. In professional and technical occupations, women's average annual earnings amounted to $7,220 compared with $12,405 for men. Suter and Miller (1973) analysed incomes in the United States for men and women 30 to 44 years of age in terms of their educational level, occupational status and work experience, and found that women earned only 73 percent of the amount earned by men. Married women with children earned about 75 percent as much as single women. However, among women with a life time of career experience, married women with children earned 94 percent as much as single women. The difference between married women without children and single women was even smaller.

The above data clearly indicate that more than sex discrimination is involved here. The key factor is the interruption by child birth of a woman's career during her prime working years. As a consequence, she loses her years of work experience

and thus has lower occupational status which explains why income is lower than that of men and single women of the same age and educational level.

Therefore, on the basis of the information presented here, it seems reasonable to assume that many women have been severely handicapped in their careers because of inadequate vocational guidance while in school, a time when important choices are made for entry to a selected career and for combining professional and traditional roles. The question arises regarding the adequacy of vocational guidance for young girls concerned with choosing a career compatible with their aptitudes and interests without ignoring long-term consequence, and to adult women who wish to maximize their potential in seeking work again. Vocational guidance for women is, therefore, of prime importance and should take into account the entire life span.

FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S VOCATIONAL CHOICES

Vocational guidance will not be effective without meeting the needs of women, neither will a counselor, without understanding the psychological and cultural factors that influence the female choice of occupations. With this in mind, the following pages will attempt to present a picture of the female in our society, as viewed from a psychological perspective in accordance with the female developmental patterns followed with the implications for vocational guidance of women at various educational levels and life stages.

Sex Role Training in Early Childhood

In a society there are certain standards or norms to which its members must operate and conform. Certain beliefs and behavior patterns are exhibited continuously through generations. It is these beliefs and behavior patterns that form much of the context in which the socialization processes shape our traditional way of life. Through the processes of socialization, children derive a set of expectations about themselves. This is due to the fact that most families, except in very special cases, promote and reinforce rather distinct roles for the male and female members. In the case of girls, sex-typed toys such as dolls and cooking sets, are provided; and grace, compliance, dependence and passivity are encouraged. Girls are expected to act like "little ladies" and are praised for doing so. Tears are tolerated if shed by girls but not by boys. Boys, on the other hand, are encouraged to engage in more active activities and to act out their aggression to show that they are "real boys" or "young men".

A girl of ten, when mother is out, consciously knows that she is expected to baby-sit her younger sibling. Usually she enjoys giving help while mother is engaged in domestic chores. This is because the concrete operational thought of this age level leads her to define her accepted role in terms of physical similarities of the role model. A boy of the same age would play wild in the woods, or construct a boat, a car, or a plane with his peers in the basement. Some girls have a disposition and tendency to behave as do boys, but instead of being encouraged and supported, they are most likely deterred because it is generally considered unseemly for a girl to be a tom-boy.

As a result of sex role training, prior to receiving a formal education in school, little girls already know what they might and should do, and the kind of behavior which is considered sex-appropriate by parents. It is noticeable that on entering school, girls tend to seek approval and avoid punishment. They are submissive, avoid fights, but cry if they feel inadequate or if they are being bullied. The manifestation of this behavior may be due to their being trained to be instrumentally and emotionally dependent. They play sex-typed games, act politely, do as they are told, and listen instead of question. Often this behavior is unconsciously reinforced by teachers. Consequently, girls become passive, sensitive, receptive, dependent, and conforming. They are less inquisitive, venturesome and

assertive than boys, and they are contented in their limited contact with people and the environment. No wonder that when asked what they would like to be when grown up the typical answer is, a mother or a teacher. When the question is addressed to boys, many more occupations beyond their immediate environment are named.

Lack of Professional Models in Middle Childhood

Career awareness follows a similar pattern. That is, the knowledge of occupation is limited to girls, but broadened to boys. Girls tend to be indifferent as to occupations, for they have few, if any, models with which to identify except those of the homemaker and the teacher. The father she loves is big and different. She knows that physically she will not grow up or act as he, and meantime she is too young to realize that mentally she may have the same capacity to do whatever her father does for a living. Do girls, then, whose mothers are working outside the home and who come from less traditional backgrounds, develop a non-traditional sex-role concept and will they henceforth be interested in careers? The answer depends on the attitude of the working mothers. Hartley and Klein (1959) found that working mothers who attributed their working to financial need rather than to achievement need, impressed their daughters that the "traditional" housewife role is the expected and desirable one. Mothers who are happy and satisfied at work are more apt to influence their daughters to develop a less traditional concept of the woman's role. Even though this is so, girls do not have high vocational aspirations. They do not tend to be motivated toward attaining great achievement in the world, because the military heroes, political leaders, famous persons in the arts and sciences are almost exclusively male. How could a girl aspire to be eminent when she has internalized that there is no place for a female?

Rapid Physical Change and Fantasy at Early Adolescence

When a girl reaches junior high school age, due to rapid physical change, her desire to explore her feminity is stronger than her desire to explore a career. The major reason for this is that girls are expected to have good manners, to develop social skills, and to be graceful and charming. This ideal image of the female is formed by most societies and it is again channeled and transmitted by the mass media. Films, television, and magazines stress physical attractiveness which leads to romance, marriage, and children.

Girls of this age still strive hard as students because academic learning is equally provided and encouraged for both boys and girls. Also high academic achievement has always been rewarded with praise and approval which are satisfying and important to female affiliation needs and self-esteem. If a girl does have a career orientation, she tends to, or she will, probably fancy a glamourous and entertaining role (Douvan and Adelson, 1966) which requires little planning and training. To become famous overnight or relive the Cinderella miracle is often her fantasy.

Societal Pressures during Adolescence and Young Adulthood

By the time a girl attends high school, subtle societal pressures begin to have an impact on her. Although vocational counselling and her maturing personality enable her to have more knowledge about the world of work and to make a better choice than she would have some years ago, yet more often than not the planning is short-term and the choice is traditional. The tendency to make such a plan and choice continues even after college.

Studies by Augrist (1970), Harmon (1971), and Regler (1967) have shown that, among high school and college girls, there is a tendency for vocational interests and choices to fluctuate widely. Douvan and Adelson (1966), in a nation-wide study of adolescents, found that girls who scored high in femininity chose traditionally female occupations. Davis (1964) investigated college women and found that teaching was the most popular occupation among them. Even those who, as freshmen, chose other occupations in college, were found in nearly 31 percent of the cases to have shifted to education by their senior years.

The tendency for young women to choose certain types of professions such as education probably results from the fact that such occupations are viewed by society as being appropriate for women. Through the process of socialization women are oriented toward work that involves interpersonal relationship and nurturance rather than work that requires decision-making and dominance.

Another plausible explanation is that, being sex-role trained, women would simply decide against certain types of professions without actually testing reality and their ability, and would therefore accept limitations rather than encounter challenge. This self-limiting behaviour not only exists in vocational choice but throughout their lives in their contact with the outside world. As a consequence, women face many limitations which are, in fact, self-imposed.

Rarely do women choose occupations such as medicine, which have been almost exclusively male-oriented. Rossi (1965) reported that, of 3,500 college women who graduated in 1961, only seven percent had long-term career goals in the male-dominated professions. In the writer's study of 221 professional women in the State of Michigan (1972) it was found that a high proportion of women who had successfully completed the Bachelor's degree in male-oriented fields changed to pursue the Master's degree in sex-typed professions. This might suggest that, although these women were highly motivated toward academic achievement and a professional career and although they had proved their ability in pursuing a male-oriented field, yet as their age advanced they realized or actually experienced the barriers to entry into the male-oriented professions and thus shifted their pursuit to the female-oriented fields. It might also suggest that the need for social approval and affiliation was still so strongly embedded in these gifted women that they finally gave up their attempt and changed to a more socially accepted occupation.

Another striking finding from the same study was the shift from female professions to male ones. The switch did not occur in graduate school, but after

college, peaking at about age forty. This probably indicates that, when young, women conceptualize or actually encounter femininity anxiety and role conflict. As they age they manage to combine successfully the roles of wife, mother, and career woman, and their internal conflict, ambivalence and guilt feelings diminish. With years of work experience and growing commitment they eventually achieve supervisory or administrative posts.

Discontinunity of Roles and Role Conflict

It is worth noting that no existing vocational development theory properly applies to women. Of the theories which are available, the most comprehensive is Super's life stage theory (Jordaan, 1974) drawn from various ideas and based on a twenty-year longitudinal study of a group of 300 fifteen-year-olds. The theory identifies a series of discernible stages consisting of the following: the Growth Stage from childhood to early adolesence; the Exploratory Stage from early adolescence to early adulthood; the Establishment Stage from early adulthood to the middle forties; the Maintenance Stage from the middle forties to retirement; and the Decline Stage from age sixty-five on.

Even such a comprehensive theory is not applicable to women because in the first place no theory is constructed around women. Secondly, women have more discontinuity in various roles at different ages as well as role conflicts when they become working mothers. Therefore, most women would probably experience two exploratory stages: one from early adolescence to early womanhood; and the other from the middle thirties to the fifties. The first exploratory stage applies to high school and college girls, while the second exploratory stage applies to married women who re-enter the labor force. Only the ten percent of women who follow the stable working career pattern or the double-track career pattern fit into the life stage theory.

Due to role discontinuity and role conflict, it is difficult for women to highly commit themselves at work. The lack of high emotional commitment bars promotion to high professional rank. It is no wonder that Zytowski (1969) postulates that vocational and homemaker roles are to a large degree mutually exclusive. Those who oppose married women working outside the home espouse a traditional point of view that marriage and motherhood are necessary for adequate feminine personality development. Women who defy the tradition are considered deviant. Thus a young woman, ambivalent toward her femininity and ambiguous about her future adult role which depends entirely upon the unpredictability of marriage and motherhood, would find it extremely difficult to strongly commit herself to even a female-dominated occupation. Those who are motivated to work would probably face those barriers to achieving a high professional status resulting from interruptions of child birth, short time work spans, or the late age at which participation in the labor force is possible.

Female Personality

Studying the female personality, Bardwick (1971) assumes that there are basically four groups of adult women: women who are content within the traditional role; women who are willing to enter the labour force at some time in their lives but who are not really committed to professional achievement and who perceive the job as an extension of their traditional role; a minority who having achieved success within the traditional role, maintain a core commitment to achievement in a vocation; and women who are not motivated to achieve the traditional role responsibilities, who shy from marriage and children, and who work in order to achieve occupational status (p. 162).

What makes women differ greatly in choosing either a career or marriage, in combining the dual role, or in having more commitment toward a family or a profession? The key to understanding the differences among women lies in their personality traits. Personality characteristics begin to show differences at an early age between males and females. Two female personality traits once developed persist to mature age. These two personality traits are passivity and dependency. Kagan and Moss (1962) did a longitudinal study and found that passive and dependent behaviors were stable for females between childhood and adulthood but were not stable for males. On the other hand, girls who as children were encouraged to be independent and assertive, tend to maintain their independency into womanhood. It is reasonable to explain that some women, who possess the personality traits of independency and assertion, would avoid dependency relationships with men but find satisfaction to work as men; those who are dependent and passive find contented happiness with the traditional role; those who are less dependent and passive are motivated to work by combining the traditional role and the professional role after marriage or motherhood.

Female Self-concept

Self-concept is regarded as a leading factor in exploring and establishing one's vocation. Super (1957; 1963) maintains that individuals choose occupations that they perceive as most similar to their self-concept and that the chosen occupation makes self-expression possible. According to Bardwick (1971) a traditionally feminine self-concept inhibits the motivation to participate in achievement role, be it academic or professional. The main reason is that women tend to perceive securing heterosexual affiliation as the critical achievement. Women, therefore, will not participate in roles which threaten their heterosexual affiliation.

Horner (1968), using projective techniques, studied 90 female and 88 male freshmen and sophomore college students. Of the 90 women, 59 showed affiliative concerns such as the fear of being socially rejected, of losing dating or marriageable qualities, the fear of isolation as the result of academic success, and a desire to keep success a secret by pretending that it had nothing to do with intelligence. Of the 88 men, only 8 expressed this kind of fear. It is evident that men fear failure while women fear success. Thus we can see that popularity and social success become

more important than academic achievement and professional success to a young woman. If, traditionally, a woman's status is reflected by or depends upon the success of her husband, why then should a young woman strive hard for her own success which will adversely affect her popularity among girls as well as boys. Being secure in affiliation with friends and the opposite sex a woman tends to develop a high traditional self-concept. With such a self-concept a woman would be contented with the traditional role. If for some reasons, such as having financial hardship or being a widow, she has to work outside the home, the tendency of her choice would be a female-oriented occupation, the nature of which is caring and helping, an extension of the traditional role which makes the expression of a traditional self-concept possible.

Immobility and Childbearing

Some employers complain that women flounder at work and have higher turnover rates. Thus they are not considered for responsible posts. (The rate of turnover is the same, i.e., 0.3 percent for women and men in 1974 according to Labor Canada Women's Bureau report for 1975.) But this is not true of all women. If they flounder at work it is because of their immobility. Often, especially in a university community, highly educated and qualified faculty member's wives because of the nepotism rules, are exploited on jobs, for there is little chance or choice for them to move within their major field. How can they establish and maintain professions as their husbands do?

Maternal absence is sometimes unavoidable because of child birth and childhood diseases. An aspiring working mother surely can suffer from the mental strain of role conflict in such circumstances. Very often a mother who chooses a career reacts to the cultural expectation of femininity by overachieving all her roles to show that she is both a good mother and a good professional. This is because the general public tends to blame the working mother and not the father for neglecting domestic duties. Even women with traditional beliefs would have mixed feelings about women who challenge male prerogatives.

Nurturance Needs in Women

Women tend to have stronger nurturance needs than men. Even before marriage, a young woman tries her utmost to cook a dinner for her admirer, while this phenomenon is less to be seen in men. After marriage, a woman tries to develop skills in domesticity. Homemaking is female-created, self-expressive, and also power assertive. In a sense, it is also achievement which does not exclude a woman's affiliation and nurturance needs. But this achievement renders no perpetual guarantee of satisfaction. She may find her cooking less appreciated and her opinion less valued when her children grow older and acquire more independence. She feels less gratified when her maternal responsibility decreases with the advancing ages of her children.

Identity Crisis

When her children are married and leave home, the sight of the empty nest brings a woman mixed feelings of disappointment and uselessness, and she loses more than she gains in joy and happiness. Strangely enough, her husband seems insensitive to these feelings. He works as usual and is even more committed to his career. He is not only maintaining his career but trying to break new ground for future achievement. His career has been truly rewarding and it will continue to grow. In retrospect, what has she achieved? Has she really a career to claim as her own? Homemaking does not require training and certification. Such work is not considered a career in a real sense. Besides a career rewards one with pay. The higher the pay the higher one's career status. One's career identifies one's degree of success. At this point in life, a woman experiences a sense of failure and a crisis of identity.

Resurgence of Achievement Needs

Although home making once satisfied the need for affiliation, nurturance and self-defining achievement, and although she has proved her femininity by winning a man's love, getting married and raising children, a woman still feels the desire for a sense of achievement in the outside world. This feeling is especially strong in a woman with a high educational level. But with the passing of time, and because of her ignorance of the work market, she is uncertain of her chances for success. This situation explains why many middle-aged women participate in volunteer work, and take jobs instead of entering professions. However, such work offers little status and pay. For a woman with a great need to achieve, this avenue becomes a secondary choice.

Baruch (1966) investigated women graduates at Radcliffe College and found that women who graduated fifteen years prior to the study had increased their motive to achieve. A study by Freidan (1963) revealed quite similar results. Her 200 classmates from Smith College expressed a desire for something more than husband, children and home after fifteen years of graduation. It is evident that a second working phase in life is the best solution to this situation. At around the age of thirty-five or forty, a woman is still young enough to make other plans for herself. She may spend another twenty-five to thirty years in a productive manner, and feel a sense of achievement and personal worth, or she may find herself drifting aimlessly from one activity to another, wasting and frustrating herself.

IMPLICATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

An understanding of the psychological and cultural variables that influence a girl's preferences in occupational choice and a married women's desire to return to work would enable the professionals within the educational and occupational

world, and in particular, the school counselor, to provide adequate guidance to discover and utilize female talents. Since vocational development occurs early, vocational guidance should be developmental and cover the entire life span.

In Elementary School

In elementary school, guidance service should begin first in the classroom with the teacher cooperating with the school counselor. It is important to recognize and respect individual differences among children disregarding their sex. Children often reveal themselves in their language, play, and art work. Careful observation of their activities is an excellent means of understanding their interest, personality, and potentiality. If any assertive behavior or masculine interest is detected in a girl, guidance can be provided with appropriate play materials or reading materials. Thus, her interest can be encouraged and her behavior reinforced instead of being inhibited. Such early recognition and respect for individual differences help to neutralize the effect of sex role training at home. Careful guidance will enable girls to explore wider fields and fulfill opportunities for vocational equality when grown up.

In recent years several useful curriculum packages dealing with self-development in the world of work have been published. These packages will widen a girl's perspective of herself and the important adults around her. By such means she will see her role in relation to the roles of others, how her role affects others, and vice versa.

Young children are limited in abstract thinking. They learn most effectively in direct observation and imitation of others' behavior. Provision of concrete role models beyond their immediate environment is indispensable. It will enrich knowledge of the world of work and furnish accurate and first hand information. By having personal contact with various work models, particularly female models in male-dominated professions, a girl will develop an appreciation and respect toward persons in all walks of life, realize the equal opportunities open to women, and attempt to test her interests and abilities in a wider range of different occupations. Therefore, vocational guidance in the elementary school should focus on development of the individual, exploration of the self in relation to the world of work and development of a positive attitude toward all types of occupations and of a broader concept of women's roles.

In Junior High School

At the junior high school level, girls are more mature than boys due to physical and physiological changes. On the average, girls reach puberty one and a half years earlier than boys. This difference in rate of physical growth has important implications for other areas of development. It may cause girls to associate socially with older boys and view mature males as superior. The abrupt shift to adolescence with the onset of menstruation may cause girls emotional upset. The changing of their physical appearance may also cause them considerable

anxiety. Generally speaking, girls have more adjustment problems and emotional disturbances at this age than boys. As a result they feel dissatisfaction in heterosexual relationships. Being rapidly changed physically, girls are ambivalent regarding their identity as well as their femininity. Thus, their emotional development is affected and it can be seen in their inconsistent moods and behavior.

Girls at this age may have a distorted self-concept. They may not perceive themselves as they are, but as they would like to be. They are also uncertain of the perception of others toward them. This confusion of the self-concept, or the incongruence of the real self-concept and the ideal self-concept, can hinder their vocational choice. This is why girls often make unreal, unrealistic and inconsistent choices. They need reassurance and further exploration in terms of their interests, abilities, and personality characteristics.

Variety of activities seems appropriate to exploring the interests of female students. Field-trips, visits, films and occupational information help broaden a girl's perspective of the world of work. Such exploration, coupled with growing knowledge, enhances realistic vocational choice. Diversity of extramural activities should be provided and permitted insofar as girls are concerned. If a girl shows preference in woodwork, mechanics, mathematics, or science, encouragement should be given. It is through actual experiences that genuine interests are aroused, talents discovered, and skills developed. Girls may be a reservoir of scientific abilities if their potentials are tapped.

An understanding counselor will not only help the junior high school girl acquire conficence in herslef, in heterosexual relationships, and in self-identity, but also provide her with adequate experiences and information. Consequently, she will go through this difficult period of life smoothly, realize the requirements and training of different occupations, and make tentative plans for her educational and vocational goals.

In Senior High School

During high school years, a girl will experience increased pressures from various sources: parents, peers, and society. All have different expectations of her. She has been praised for getting good grades in school. It is implicitly assumed that she should be studious and learn and that after graduation be launched into the labor market. As she grows older she becomes increasingly aware that she is not required to demonstrate her knowledge. The conflicting message that she should compete intellectually with boys at all levels of education, and yet contrarily that she is expected to be subservient to men and to take the traditional feminine roles confuses her. This means that achievement needs oppose affiliation needs. Further, academic success does not ensure popularity among peers, particularly among boys. Most of all, subtle societal pressure that girls should marry and have children is all but irresistible. At this stage, it is essential that girls be made aware of other options open to them upon graduation, e.g., attending college and seeking employment.

They may need help in coping with confusion and anxiety concerning their future roles. They should be informed that they may combine both traditional role and occupational role, emphasizing one aspect of their lives over the other, but excluding neither, and that not all women, just as not all men, are successful in the multiple roles they assume. Both sexes, in fact, can develop and maintain successfully a multifaceted life.

Girls who have a high need to achieve and who have the potential for diversified roles should be encouraged to develop a broader and more flexible life plan by attending college. They need specific information about scholarships, financial assistance, and various educational paths leading to attainment of life goals.

High school girls have to make a specific decision as to what they will do next, and this decision can greatly change the course of their lives. Whatever decisions are made, information is needed with respect to equal opportunity for entry, and to the possibility for re-entry into the labour force and also to future advancement within the labour force at a later age. Self-awareness and self-analysis paired with testing results in inventories of personality, interest, and aptitude, are critical in assessing one's values, beliefs, attitudes, and life styles in both vocational planning and the making of decisions. If further education is decided upon, a girl may postpone employment seeking, but her chosen field of study should be compatible with her interest and ability now and her potential in the future.

Because high school students are verbally skillful and intellectually well developed, participation in group counseling can be an effective means of facilitating decision making. Counseling groups should be both same-sex and mix-sex. Same-sex groups help develop insight into common problems such as further education, vocation, heterosexual relationships, and marriage. They also enhance peer acceptance, support and affiliation. Mix-sex groups provide a chance for boys and girls to discuss sex differences in life patterns and the changing roles of women in the present day. They can also discuss the egalitarian life pattern for married couples who share child rearing and household tasks without losing self-esteem and masculinity or femininity (Farrell, 1970). Boys and girls can also exchange views of difficulties as well as of possibilities for both sexes working in the same field, be it male-dominated or otherwise. Being young and relatively unprejudiced and being given the opportunity of studying together and observing the abilities of the other sex will help the younger generation accept and even welcome the opposite sex in working together for a common goal.

In College

In the college years, marriage and career are women's main concerns. Some college women get married while attending college. Sometimes both the husband and the wife are students. They have to work part-time, practice birth control, and schedule time for work and study as well as for domestic chores and leisure. If they happen to have a child, the schedule becomes so tight that it is almost impossible to

get a moment to relax. Of course, the majority of college women try to complete studies before considering marriage. Whatever the case, it is essential that they realize that marriage need not necessarily jeopardize careers, and vice-versa. There is no consistent evidence that working women are subject to greater marital dissatisfaction than those who are full-time housewives, nor is there significant evidence that maternal employment has negative effects on children. It is the time schedule for work and the intensive care given to children that are important. However, the positive attitude of the husband toward his wife's working is necessary. A supporting, secure and self-confident husband may encourage a wife to work and to live a fuller life, and the assistance he renders in household tasks and child care may enhance family solidarity. As a consequence, it satisfies the need for achievement and self-actualization on the part of the wife and increases independence and self-reliance on the part of the children when they grow older. With better understanding and cooperation in the family, in addition to more income, the husband may in turn find greater affection and happiness at home.

Today the demands made on homemakers are not as exhausting as they were previously due to the invention of labor-saving appliances, better designed houses, and prepared foods, canned or frozen. A college woman may realize that combining the role of a wife, mother, and professional, is not as difficult for her as it was for women of previous generations. Furthermore, the prevailing ideology among the younger generation helps diminish role distinction between husband and wife and thus, reduce role conflict. College women should be aware of the middle-aged identity crisis as well as the possibility of the unexpected loss of a husband resulting from natural or accidental causes. They should also be aware of the interruption caused by child birth in their careers when making plans for the future, since these are the realities of life.

Same-sex group counseling experiences at this stage of life will provide intellectual women with a chance to examine themselves: Have they fully realized their situation? What have they achieved so far? Which direction should they continue to pursue toward a future goal? Is academic achievement really a threat to social acceptance and marriageability?

An effective program of vocational guidance will provide accurate information, enlightening counseling, and facility of testing in personality, interest, and aptitude that enhance knowledge of self and the environment in order to make possible careful and realistic long-term planning. It is hoped that having benefited from both vocational guidance and higher education this group of selected women will contribute not only to their family as a small unit but to the society at large.

In Adult Life

Although an effective program of vocational guidance can minimize the need for adult counseling, the need for such adult counseling will continue because of discontinuity of roles. Counseling at this level is primarily concerned with helping women to re-establish self-identity, to gain knowledge of self and the world of work in order to return to the labor force.

The major task of counseling adult women is to help them to rediscover themselves. Adult women are generally indecisive and lack confidence. They are disappointed with their present declining role and yet are uncertain of the future. They have a feeling of inadequacy as well as incompetency. Their self-esteem is remarkably low, but they are motivated to find a new role that will enable them to test their ability, to be useful, and to feel a sense of personal worth. Role playing and role changing occur in one's life. A shift to a new role or a decline in an old role does not mean failure provided the new role that one assumes helps the formation of identity in continuance of growth.

Unlike counseling high school girls and young college women, the counseling of women should reflect their wider range of background and professional qualifications. An adult woman might be well qualified professionally when young, but over the years may have gotten out of touch with her field. Or she might be a high school certificate holder without special training. Or she might be a college graduate with a couple of years of work experience before marriage. However with a lapse of nearly two decades her knowledge of the labor market could be limited and inaccurate. An adult woman may also be a college undergraduate who intends to complete her degree before seeking employment.

A counselor should first acquaint herself with the counselee's background, her knowledge of her self and her environment, and how much and what kind of information the counselee needs. Does she fully understand her present situation, and the factors that contribute to it? If she seeks employment, is her view of occupation highly colored by her previous, and perhaps outdated, knowledge? What kind of work is she looking for? Is she qualified for such work? If not, does she need a refresher course or retraining? How can she secure a job and hold on to it? How secure is she, psychologically, to return to the work market? Since she has been away from work for a long period of time, can she compete with the much younger women who have recently qualified for the position? Can she cope with the work-home situation altered by her sudden change of schedule? Does she realize that she may not be professionally equal in rank and pay with the other women of her age? Furthermore, what will be her husband's attitude toward her working?

Since adult women have been relatively sheltered and isolated at home after marriage, once the feeling of uselessness or failure in their traditional roles grips them, they tend to blame themselves for it without realizing the causes that contributed to their present situation. They need consciousness-raising counseling individually as well as in a same-sex group. With women in the same boat an adult woman could express and share her feelings, obtain sympathetic understanding, and explore and examine a new potential role. To sum up, adult women need concern and support to build up their confidence. They need testing in interest and aptitude to make a second vocational choice. They need information of the outside world about economics, employment, and work situation.

Adult Women Returning to the Labor Force

It is advantageous to have adult women returning to the labor force. Their motivation to achieve is high. They are free of role conflict and are now determined to play a new role – that of a career woman. Being free from maternal responsibilities, they will have no turnover rate. Since they have successfully tested their femininity with marriage and motherhood, they have no feelings of anxiety, ambivalence, and guilt. Given the opportunity they will play their new role as a career woman successfully for another twenty to thirty years.

Presently there are many centers for women interested in continuing education. These centers provide excellent guidance services for adult women who wish either to continue their education or to find their way back to employment. The programs implemented in these centers may vary, but their goal is the same. Their goal, as stated in the Minnesota Plan for the Continuing Education of Women, is to attempt to help girls and young women to foresee and plan for the interrupted multi-role lives they will lead; to enable them to maintain intellectual skills and training throughout the family years; and to help older women to find activities, paid or unpaid, in which they can use their capacities in the fullest and most appropriate way.

CONCLUSION

It is perceived that vocational guidance stands out as the most urgent need of women participating in the work market. Adequate guidance can help direct women's abilities to an appropriate level of work and thus avoid frustration and waste of talent.

Being better counseled, educated and trained, women will be prepared to accept more demanding, interesting, responsible and more highly paid positions. If equality is to be attained, women as well as men should be hired and promoted on the bases of ability and qualification, neither being handicapped nor privileged because of his or her sex. Thus, the question of sex discrimination should not enter into employment, rather it should be a matter of personal choice.

If significant changes in the role and status of women are to take place, women must take the initiative to free themselves from the restrictions which the tradition has imposed on them. It is also the responsibility of those who help to shape the lives of women, and those who have the influence on educational and vocational development such as parents, teachers, counselors, public servants and businessmen, to seriously attempt to assist both young and adult women. With the upgrading and increasing of woman-power we can predict that great contributions will be rendered in every field for the progress of our society.

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